

Remarks

The Examiner is thanked for the Official Office Action mailed February 26, 2003. Applicant appreciates Examiner's indication that claims 2, 4, and 7 would be allowable if re-written in independent form. This amendment and request for reconsideration is intended to be fully responsive to the above Office Action.

In the above Office Action, the Examiner objected to Applicant's priority claim because a certified copy of the German application has not been filed. The drawings were also objected to because the figure numbers were approximately the same size as the reference numbers. The specification was objected to because of the lack of appropriate section headings. Claims 23, 24, and 27 were objected to as being duplicate claims. For various reasons, claims 2-8, 12, 15, 18, and 22-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Claims 1, 3, 5, 6, 9-17, 22, and 24-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,449,541 to Lipp et al. Claims 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 16-18, 19-22, 24, and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,259,190 to Bagley et al. Claims 18-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Lipp et al. in view of Bagley. The Examiner also indicated that claims 2, 4, and 7 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 23, which is a duplicate of claim 2 written in independent form, would also be allowable if re-written to address the 35 U.S.C. 112 rejections.

With regard to the priority document, a certified copy of the subject application will follow this response.

With regard to the drawings, appropriately corrected drawings accompany this amendment and request for reconsideration. Additionally, a side view of the terminal piece (40) in Figure 4 has been designated as Figure 4A, in accordance with the requirement that only one view may be shown in each figure. Lines connecting the two views have also been eliminated. Changes corresponding to this drawing change were also made to the specification. Although corrections have been submitted for the current drawings, Applicant will submit formal drawings after notice of allowance. The formal drawings will incorporate all modifications approved during prosecution.

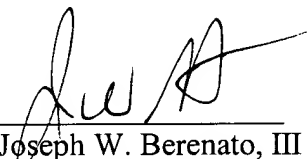
With regard to the rejections under 35 U.S. C. 102(b), 103(a) and 112 second paragraph, claims 1-27 have been canceled, and new claims 28-57 have been added. Allowable claims 2, 4, and 7, have been re-written in independent form as claims 28, 29, and 30, respectively. These claims have been modified to address the 35 U.S.C. 112 concerns identified in the original claims.

New independent claims 31 and 42 have been written to address the prior art cited in the previous rejection, as well as the 35 U.S.C. 112 concerns. Both independent claims disclose a filter group comprised of electrically conductive, and electrically non-conductive ceramic filter elements, positioned adjacent to one

another so that the filter elements are exposed to parallel flow. This limitation is substantially the same as the limitation indicated in original claim 7. In the previous Office Action, the Examiner indicated that the prior art did not teach or fairly suggest this limitation. Dependent claims 32-41, and 43-57, have been written to further distinguish the invention from the prior art.

It is respectfully submitted that the above amendments resolve all outstanding issues and place this application in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner believe that additional discussion would advance the prosecution of the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any required fees to deposit account no. 50-0548.

Respectfully Submitted,

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